

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the specification, reference numeral 18 has been deleted to clarify Figure 2, inasmuch as Figure 2 is a plan cross-section and would not show both the top sheet and the bottom sheet as currently presented. Accordingly, the specification has been amended to indicate that only one of the two sheets is shown in Figure 2. Such amendment will not prevent enablement of one of skill in the art from making the present invention. No new matter has been added.

Claims 7-27 remain in this application. Claims 1-6 have been canceled. Claims 7-10 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, because claim 7 has been so amended, claim 7 and dependent claims 8-10 are respectfully submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Likewise, the Examiner indicated that claim 11, 18 and 25 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Accordingly, claim 11, 18 and 25 have been amended to overcome the rejection and objection.

The Examiner noted that claim 12, line 4 was indefinite. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner mistakenly referenced claim 12, when claim 11 contained the text indicated by the Examiner as being indefinite. Claim 11 has been amended to overcome this rejection. In addition, claim 11 has been amended to better clarify the placement and function of the drape. Support for this clarification can be found at least in Figure 2. No new matter has been added. It is respectfully submitted that claim 11, 18 and 25 and any respective dependent claims are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph for lacking antecedent basis. Claims 19 and 20 have been amended to provide proper antecedent basis, and are now respectfully submitted to be in condition for allowance.

The drawings have been amended to overcome the objection that reference characters "17" and "18" point to the same feature. In particular, reference character "18" has been deleted from the specification and removed from the drawing. It is respectfully requested that this objection be withdrawn and the corrected drawings attached hereto accepted.

In accordance with the Examiner's helpful instruction, an information disclosure statement in proper form (PTO – 1449) is submitted herewith.

SUMMARY

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and objections is hereby requested. Allowance of Claims 7-27 at an early date is solicited.

If upon consideration of the above, the Examiner should feel that outstanding issues remain in the present application that could be resolved, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated to discuss resolution of such issues.

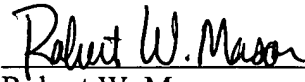
If any charges or fees must be paid in connection with the foregoing communication (including but not limited to the payment of an extension fee, information disclosure statement fee or issue fees), or if any overpayment is to be refunded in connection with the above-identified application, any such charges or fee, or any such overpayment may be respectively paid out of, or into, the Deposit Account No. 50-0326 of Kinetic Concepts, Inc. Please construe this authorization to pay as the necessary Petition or request which is required to

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accompany the payment. A copy of the Fee Transmittal form PTO/SB/17 is included for accounting purposes.

Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Mason", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert W. Mason

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